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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to describe the progress that Austin (Texas) Independent School District (AISD) has made in its affirmative action plan, and to outline the difficulties currently being faced in the recruitment of minorities in Texas and nationally. The status of the AISD is described, followed by statistics on the teacher supply in Texas as well as the nation. Nationally, many incentives to attract minorities and others into teaching have been proposed. Scholarships, fellowships, forgivable loans, and a "GI Bill" or "ROTC" approach to attracting blacks and Hispanics into teacher training programs are some examples. On a smaller scale, AISD has implemented minority recruitment and retention programs. Appended are 13 references and statistical figures on AISD status (1987), AISD new hiring (1987), teacher ethnicity, administrator ethnicity, age of AISD professionals, age of AISD administrators, attrition of AISD professionals, attrition of AISD administrators, comparison ethnicity of teaching candidates to AISD recruiting goals, AISD student teachers, and Texas teacher supply. (SI)

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Against the Odds:
Recruiting Minority Faculty and Staff

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Against the Odds: Recruiting Minority Faculty and Staff

The Affirmative Faculty/Staff Recruitment Plan of the Austin Independent School District (AISD), adopted in 1977 and revised in 1983, lists three goals:

- matching the ethnic percentages of professionals and administrators to those of the student body,
- placing males and females at all levels of employment, and
- recruiting professionals and administrators within certain ethnic ranges: Black, 15-20%; Hispanic, 25-30%; and Anglo/Other, 50-55%.

The purpose of this paper is to describe the progress that AISD has made in its affirmative action plan, and to outline the difficulties currently being faced in the recruitment of minorities in Texas and nationally.

The Status in AISD

Austin is one of the eight largest school districts in Texas, with over 61,000 students. The AISD student population in 1987 had 1.4 times as many Black students as were found statewide, proportionally fewer Anglo/Others, and Hispanics in numbers very close to statewide percentages. As for faculty and staff membership, in both the District and Texas, the percentages of Hispanic professionals (teachers and other staff) and administrators rose in 1987 while the percentages for Blacks dropped slightly. The first goal, however, of matching faculty/staff ethnic percentages to those of the students, has yet to be achieved. Black students in 1987 formed 20% of the student body, Black professionals composed 12% of the professional faculty, and Black administrators numbered 18% of the administrative staff. Almost 32% of the student body in 1987 was Hispanic; only 17% of the professional staff, however, and 23% of AISD administrators were also Hispanic.

The proportion of male professionals, including teachers, has declined steadily since 1980 for both AISD and Texas as a whole. Only 18% of the professional force in AISD in 1987 was male. The percentage of female administrators in AISD, on the other hand, continued to rise in 1987, to 55% of the total, with the District employing 1.5 times as many women administrators as were found for the state and 4.7 times the national rate. The second goal of the District, then, of placing males and females at all levels of employment, has

been accomplished for administrative personnel but not for professional staff.

While the hiring goals (of 15-20% for Blacks and 25-30% for Hispanics) for all professionals in 1987 were not met, the District exceeded its goal for Black administrators newly hired or promoted in 1987 and met its goal for Hispanic administrators.

A demographic reality affecting future employment ratios is that a large proportion of Black professionals and administrators in AISD are presently at or near retirement age. In fact, the profession itself is aging: one half of the 2.2 million teachers in the country are expected to retire in the next five years (Tewel & Trubowitz, 1987). Another worrying statistic is that, for both Blacks and Hispanics in the District, about half of all new minority hires leave teaching within five years, an attrition rate which conforms to national teacher profiles (Murnane, 1987; Heyns, 1988).

The Teacher Supply in Texas

A temporary picture of the teacher market in Texas can be drawn from the Texas Examination of Current Administrators and Teachers (TECAT) recertification results from 1986 and 1987. In the TECAT exam, as you may recall, over 250,000 Texas educators holding teacher certification were tested and recertified, thus forming a quantifiable labor market for education in the state. It can be seen from the TECAT results that minorities in Texas are actually employed at higher percentage rates than they represent in the TECAT pool of recertified teachers and administrators. In AISD, specifically, Black employment in 1987 was 1.8 times their representation in the teacher pool, and for Hispanics, it was 1.6 times.

The supply of teachers and administrators recertified through 1987 but not already employed in education is a small one. The idea that there is an abundant reserve of minority teachers not currently working in Texas is more myth than reality.

Minorities are not entering the labor pool in the state as newly certified teachers in significant numbers, either. Graduating students or out-of-state teachers seeking certification in Texas are required to take the Examination for Certification of Educators in Texas (ExCET), but minority representation in the 1987 ExCET results was meager: 5,253 tests passed by minorities out of 38,227 total tests passed by all applicants (less than 14%).

Moreover, minorities entering college in Texas in 1987 and choosing the teaching profession (by taking the Pre-Professional Skills Test, or P-PST) numbered fewer than 1,400 for the whole state. (Only 40% of Blacks taking the test passed it, and only half of Hispanics. In contrast, the passing rate for Anglo/Others was 79%.)

Another indicator of the scarcity of minority candidates is that while Austin area colleges and universities provided over 500 student teachers to the District in 1987, only 10% of those were minorities.

The Teacher Supply in the Nation

Minority students are failing to go into teaching nationally, as well. From 1975-76 to 1982-83, for example, the number of bachelor's degrees in education received by Blacks declined by 52%, and for Hispanics, by 11% (Rodman, 1985). In one study of Blacks scoring high on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) for college entrance, less than 1% indicated an interest in education as a college major (Graham, 1987).

The failure rates for minorities on teacher competency tests further limit their entrance into the profession. Not only in Texas, with a failure rate of 53% for Blacks and 38% for Hispanics on the ExCET exam, and a failure rate of 61% for Blacks and 50% for Hispanics on the P-PST exam, but also in Georgia, Oklahoma, California, and other states, similar failure rates prevail (Anrig, Goertz, & McNeil, 1986). Failure rates of such magnitude, for all minorities, no matter whether from predominantly Black schools or white college campuses, are more than startling--they are alarming.

Another index of the precarious status of minorities in education comes from the 300 Blacks and Hispanics who responded to the Survey of the American Teacher (conducted by Louis Harris) this year. Of those surveyed, 41% stated they were likely to leave teaching within the next five years. In contrast, one-fourth of the non-minority teachers were similarly disaffected (Jennings, 1988).

The shortage of minorities attending college, choosing education as a career, passing competency tests, and staying in teaching as their chosen profession is becoming acute. It is a compound, multifaceted problem, defying easy or quick solutions by even the best-intentioned school district.

Summary

Nationally, many incentives to attract minorities and others into teaching have been proposed. Scholarships and

fellowships, forgivable loans, a "GI Bill" or "ROTC" approach to attracting Blacks and Hispanics into teacher training programs are some examples. The recruiting of mid-career professionals, especially from the military or government service (and subsequent relaxation of certification requirements), is frequently advanced (Graham, 1987). A domestic "educational Peace Corps" for short-term employment of liberal arts majors and others who may or may not remain in the teaching profession has been suggested (Wimpelberg & King, 1983). Clinics for preparing minority candidates to take teacher competency tests have been reported, also (Cole, 1986). These are largely societal solutions, beyond the resources of many of our school districts to effect; several other suggestions on a smaller scale for minority recruitment and retention, however, are being implemented in AISD and show much promise.

Two professional networking groups which have been started by individual initiative and are not sponsored directly by the District are the Black Administrative Council and Hispanic Public School Administrators. Both groups are informal associations of administrators serving as mentors to minority members of the AISD faculty and staff.

Two future teacher clubs for high school students are active in the District, Future Teachers of America at Travis High School, and a chapter of Texas Assocation of Future Educators at Reagan High School. One study of high school seniors in ten southeastern states revealed the distressing fact that 74% of the seniors surveyed had never had anyone--not counselors or teachers or anyone--discuss with them teaching as a potential career (Evans, 1987). These career clubs attempt directly to address and channel the teaching aspirations of students.

An innovative approach to providing internship experiences for high school youth, particularly minorities, is being fielded this year in Austin at the Science Academy magnet program at LBJ High School. Through means of a grant from the National Science Foundation, Science Academy ninth graders are mentoring younger students in science labs and classrooms. Also, eleventh and twelfth graders in the Science Academy are using special curricula to teach science lessons to third graders in two elementary schools. Not only are high school students being introduced to teaching in these ways, but younger students are being provided with role models for their own study of science, and perhaps for their own teaching experience in time to come.

Recruitment of minorities as teachers and administrators will remain difficult for AISD for the foreseeable future. The realities are inescapable that student teachers in the

District include few Hispanics and fewer Blacks, that minority students in Texas entering teacher training are not numerous, and that recent minority graduates or out-of-state minority teachers seeking Texas certification account for only a small number of those who pass.

The Austin Independent School District has competed with the other districts in Texas for the best and the brightest among Blacks and Hispanics, female administrators and male teachers to fill its faculty and staff. But competing hard is not enough: there simply are not sufficient numbers of ethnic minorities or male teachers to go around, in Texas or nationwide.

Confronting the problem of minority recruiting begins, at the least, with an educated awareness of the odds we face. Searching for solutions and overcoming these odds press upon us, not at some distant date, but in the immediate future. It has been estimated that minority faculty in American schools will be reduced from 12.5% in 1980 to less than half that--5%--by the end of the decade, at a time when minority students will have increased to 30% of those in school (Rodman, 1985). The time to recruit and keep teachers, black and brown as well as white teachers, is now.

FIGURES

Figure 1. AISD Status, 1987

Group	Students %	Professionals % (Difference)	Administrators % (Difference)
Ethnicity			
Black	20.1	12.3 (-7.8)	18.3 (-1.8)
Hispanic	31.9	17.0 (-14.9)	22.6 (-9.3)
Other	48.0	70.6 (+22.6)	59.1 (+11.1)
Sex			
Male		18.4	45.2
Female		81.6	54.8

Figure 2. AISD New Hiring, 1987

Ethnicity	Goal Range %	Professionals % (Difference)	Administrators % (Difference)
Black	15-20	8.7 (-6.3)	26.1 (+6.1)
Hispanic	25-30	17.7 (-7.3)	26.1 (0.0)
Other	50-55	73.6 (+18.6)	47.8 (-2.2)

Figure 3. Teacher Ethnicity

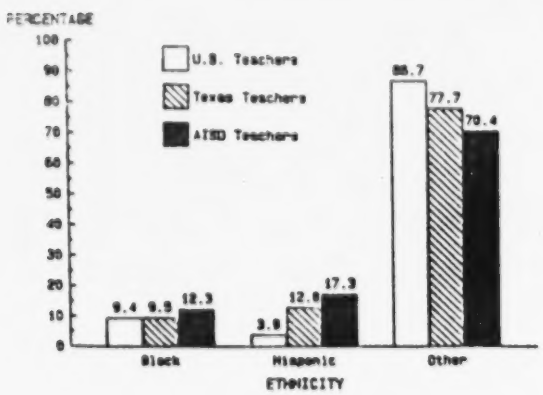


Figure 4. Administrator Ethnicity

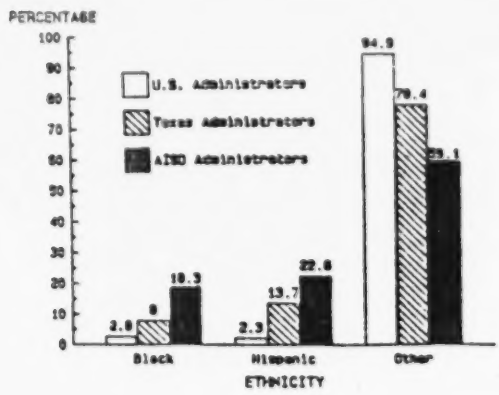


Figure 5. Age of AISD Professionals

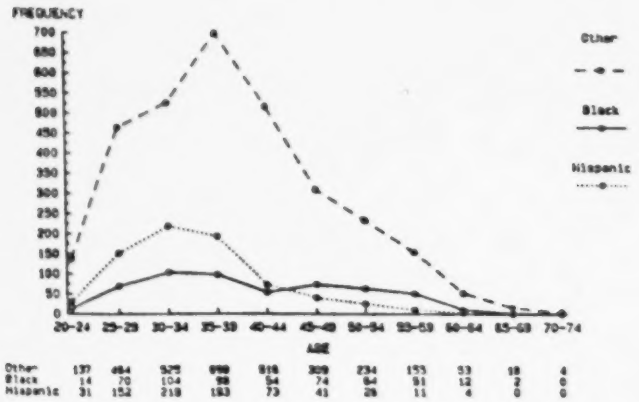


Figure 6. Age of AISD Administrators

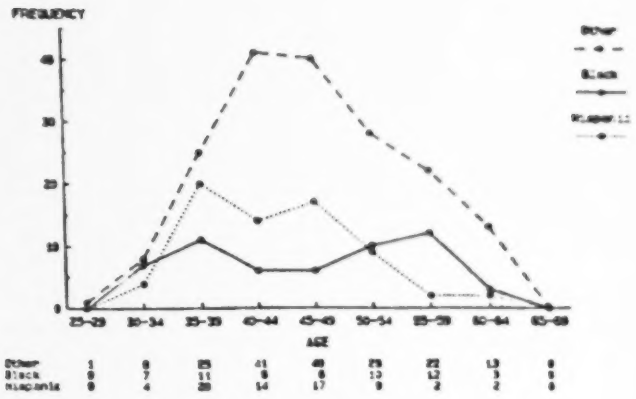


Figure 7. Attrition of AISD Professionals

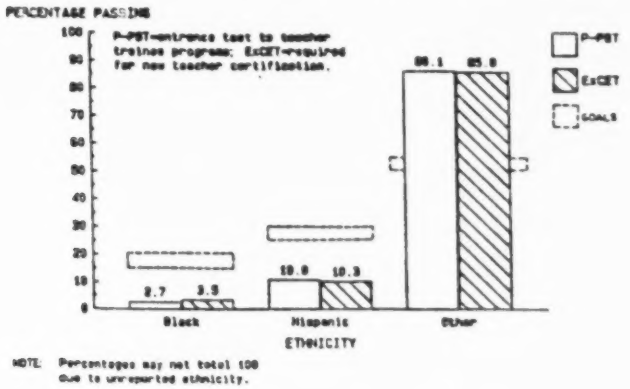
ETHNICITY	NEW PROFESSIONALS HIRED IN 1983 NUMBER	PERCENT	LEFT WITHIN 1ST YEAR	LEFT AFTER 1ST YEAR	LEFT AFTER 2ND YEAR	LEFT AFTER 3RD YEAR	LEFT AFTER 4TH YEAR	TOTAL NO LONGER IN DISTRICT 12/31/87 NUMBER	% LEAVING
Black	23	(5.0)	0	0	6	6	1	13	(56.5)
Hispanic	24	(5.2)	0	0	6	8	0	14	(58.3)
Other	413	(89.8)	73	66	26	28	6	199	(48.2)
Total	460	(100.0)	73	66	38	42	7	226	(49.1)

Note: Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.

Figure 8. Attrition of AISD Administrators

ETHNICITY	NEW ADMINISTRATORS HIRED IN 1983 NUMBER	PERCENT	LEFT AFTER 1ST YEAR	LEFT AFTER 3RD YEAR	LEFT AFTER 4TH YEAR	TOTAL NO LONGER IN DISTRICT 12/31/87 NUMBER	% LEAVING
Black	2	(10.0)	0	1	1	2	(100.0)
Hispanic	2	(10.0)	0	0	0	0	(0.0)
Other	16	(80.0)	1	2	0	3	(18.8)
Total	20	(100.0)	1	3	1	5	(25.0)

Figure 9. Ethnicity of Teaching Candidates Compared to AISD Recruiting Goals

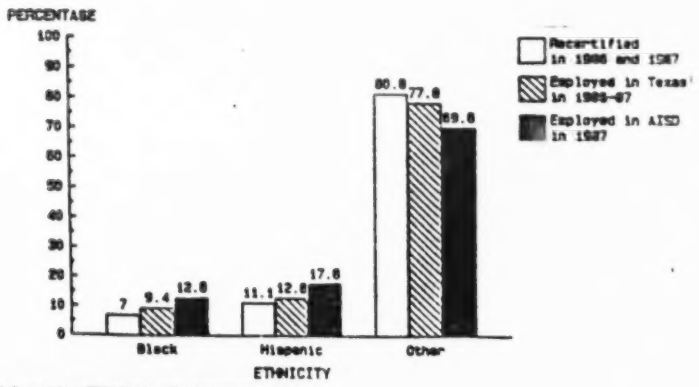


NOTE: Percentages may not total 100 due to unreported ethnicity.

Figure 10. AISD Student Teachers

YEAR	ETHNICITY		
	Black	Hispanic	Other
1975-76	7.1	11.7	81.2
1979-80	4.5	11.2	84.3
Fall, 1980	3.4	9.2	87.4
Fall, 1981	4.6	8.3	87.1
Fall, 1982	4.2	8.4	87.5
Fall, 1983	5.6	11.5	82.8
Fall, 1984	4.7	9.3	86.0
Spring & Fall, 1985	2.8	11.7	85.5
Spring & Fall, 1986	5.5	10.3	84.2
Spring & Fall, 1987	1.8	8.3	89.9

Figure 11. The Texas Teacher Supply



Total passing TECAT-251,779 (ethnicity unreported-2,812). Total teachers and administrators employed in Texas-208,517, in AISD-4,233.

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